



THE CASE OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

In Reference to the DEBT to The ORPHANS, and Others.



Y the Custom of *LONDON*, Confirmed by divers Acts of Parliament, The *Lord Mayor* and *Aldermen* are Guardians of the *ORPHANS* of all Freemen of the said City, and have the Care and Government of Them and their Estates.

By that Custom, the Executors of every the said Citizens are Bound, either to find sufficient Sureties to the *Chamberlain* for the *ORPHANS* Portions; or otherwise, To Pay the same unto the *Chamberlain of London* as a Deposit, to be kept for Them until Security be found, or their respective Portions become Due.

In regard the Estates of the Citizens were mostly Personal, and liable to be Wasted by *Widows* and *Executors*; That Custom has been very necessary, for the Protection and Preservation of the Persons, Estates and Marriages of many Thousands of *Orphans*.

The *CHAMBER* of *London*, for many Ages, had an Unquestionable Credit, and was clear from all Debts until about the Beginning of the Troubles between *England* and *Scotland*.

By occasion of the Troubles then arising, Debts of a great Value (Owing to the City) became Desperate, a Necessity was put upon Them of very great Charges and Expences to the Then Government: And the Troubles continuing and increasing till the Rebellion in *Ireland* broke out, They were constrained by the Powers to whom They were subject, to lay out many other great Sums of *Money*, whereby They then became much Indebted.

Nevertheless the Credit of the City continuing, many *Executors* (unwilling or unable to find Security) besought the Court of *Aldermen* to take the *Orphans Money* upon Interest, which ought to have been only a Deposit; Who were thereby induc'd to take the same at Interest, which has amounted to the greatest part of the Debt now Owing.

Not only this Burthen of Interest for *Orphans Portions* was unduly brought upon the *Chamber*; but the *Cities Revenues*, by the long continued Troubles, were greatly Lessened; And the dreadful Fire of *London* hapning: By the concurrence of so many Publick Miseries, They were rendred almost Desperate to Answer so great Demands.

Yet the Court of *Aldermen* ceased not their continual Endeavours, to find the best Ways and Methods (by Retrenching their Charges, and Improving their Revenue) towards satisfying the said Debt; And did continue Paying both *Principal* and *Interest* till after the *Quo Warranto* brought against the City, to destroy their Being: Which not only put them to great Charge; but ruin'd their Credit, and rendred them for ever incapable to answer those Demands, unless by the Assistance of the *Parliament*.

For that Reason, The *City of London* have since that Time made Their Application to every *Parliament*, and in the First *Parliament* of Their *MAJESTIES*, a Bill for that purpose was Twice Read in the *House of Commons*; And the City having laid before Them their Revenue, the Particulars for the Relief were Agreed upon in a *Grand Committee* of that Whole House: To which the *House* Concurred, and (as we believe) the *Bill* had passed there, if it had not been prevented by a *Prorogation*.

And the *City* have Endeavoured, That the same *Bill* might be Received by this *Present House of Commons*; Who did the Last Session several times Appoint a Day for the Consideration of that Matter.

And notwithstanding the *City* has not Received any *Money* of *ORPHANS* (or Others) at Interest, or by way of Deposit, since *Christmas*, 1683; Yet since that Time (by getting in Debts formerly Owing to the City, Retrenching Expences, and Improvement of their Revenue) They have Paid to All *Orphans* (whose Portions in the *Chamber of London* exceeded not Five and Fifty Pounds) Their Whole Debt, Amounting to

Ten Thousand Six Hundred Seventy Three Pounds, Two Shillings and Eight Pence;
And have further Paid to the *ORPHANS*, and Others, for Interest,

Ninety Seven Thousand, Two Hundred and Fifty Pounds.

And this *Present Court of Aldermen* do humbly Insist, That they have done, and do still use Their utmost Endeavours, to find out all Concealments of the *Cities Rights*, and believe Themselves sufficiently Instructed in All the Interests and Concerns of the City, from whence any Profit can possibly arise to the *ORPHANS*; And that there can neither be justly Objected against them any Failure of their Duties therein, or the least Waste or Misemployment of any part of Their Income; or that there has been any Defect in giving Reasonable Encouragement to any Persons, who can do any further Service for the *Orphans*.